



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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PHACELIA INCANA
HOARY PHACELIA

Hoary Phacelia is an annual with erect, branched stems that are up to 10 cm high. The alternate leaves have well developed petioles and broadly elliptic, entire-margined blades that are 3-15 mm long. Foliage is covered with spreading, often gland-tipped hairs. Short-stalked flowers are borne in sparse, narrow, 1-sided, curved spikes that unwind as they mature. The white to pale bluish flowers have 5 strap-shaped sepals that are 3-4 mm long and a 5-lobed tubular corolla that is scarcely longer than the calyx. Stamens are held within the tube. The fruit is a capsule with many angular, pitted seeds. Flowering in June-July, fruiting in July.

The combination of annual habit, entire leaves, and whitish flowers separate this species from other members of the Waterleaf Family in our area. Members of the Borage Family have 1-4 nutlets rather than capsules.